

A FURTHER RECORD OF CERAMIDIA VIRIDIS DRUCE (LEP.: CTENUCHIDAE) — A deformed specimen of this species was discovered with its pupa and flimsy cocoon in a crate of Colombian bananas at St. Austell in July 1984. This was reported to me by Mrs. L. de Greeve. I am grateful to the Rev. D. J. L. Agassiz for his opinion, and the staff at the British Museum who subsequently confirmed the moth's identity. Dr. F. N. H. SMITH Turnstones, Perrancoombe, Perranporth, Cornwall.

“JUST A SHORT SERIES” — Destruction of habitats has caused a steady loss of alternative accessible breeding grounds with resulting depletion of the majority of our butterfly species, and though some may still be abundant where they occur such places have been increasingly vulnerable to chainsaw, bulldozer or plough. Unless protected they are capable of becoming unrecognisable literally overnight, and there is good reason for anxiety. If such loss continues many of the more desirable species, from the collector's point of view, will ultimately be restricted to reserves where collecting is either forbidden or under very tight control. There is indeed now widespread doubt as to whether there can be any justification at all for collecting butterflies.

The subject was discussed at a meeting of the British Entomological and Natural History Society in April, 1985. A realistic appraisal of the pros and cons debated, by Mr. A. E. Stubbs of the Nature Conservancy Council, who chaired the meeting, was published in the Proceedings and Transactions of the Society in November, 1985, and I think that all collectors should read this.

As a collector I have found it impossible to explain collecting to non-collectors. They, and perhaps even more so some of my conservationist colleagues, cannot understand it at all, and I suppose collecting is something to do with the genes. Collecting so often starts in youth with the desire to catch a red admiral at the top of a buddleia bush, and no more justification than the excitement of success and the joy of possession is required. This does not last for long, and sophistication demands better reasons, such as the quest for perfection or knowledge and the ambition to fill empty spaces. In my own case it has been a mixture of these, but they have brought a growing respect and sense of responsibility which have made killing irksome. However, deep down I am a conservationist because I dread the day when butterflies and moths need to be so protected that there is no longer any choice about collecting them. This is all too possible, and I think the writing is already on the wall as far as many butterfly species are concerned. Moths have not, and may never have, the same popular appeal as butterflies, and the freedom to collect all but a very few of them without arousing much hostility still exists, but it seems to me unwise to take it for granted